

Revelation 21:9 -- Then one of the seven angels...came to me (*John*) and talked with me, saying,  
"Come, I will show you *the bride, the Lamb's wife.*" (NKJV - clarity and emphasis added)

**Background:** In a number of places in the New Testament those who believe are referred to as the bride of Christ. It is the book of Romans that Paul uses the analogy of marriage to help people understand the difference between the law and grace. The marriage relationship our "old man," is clearly understood. Quoting from Dr. Eugene Peterson's "The Message" with sin,  
in Romans 7:

"For instance, a wife is legally tied to her husband while he lives, but if he dies, she's free. If she lives with another man while her husband is living, she's obviously an adulteress. But if he dies, she is quite free to marry another man in good conscience, with no one's disapproval."

Our marriage to the law is "till death do us part." We are legally tied to the law as long as the law lives. Since God's Word (the law) is eternal, it will never die. However, as the wife of the husband (law), if I should die and be raised to a new life, then the old husband would have no hold over me and I would be free to marry another. In faith we are crucified in Christ and in water baptism (Romans 6) we are raised to a new life. Now we are free to choose to be bound to a new groom, Jesus Christ. By faith we become the bride of Christ and the old husband no longer has any dominion or rule over us.

Romans 6:14 -- or sin shall not have dominion over you, for *you are not under law but under grace.* (NKJV - emphasis added)

Romans 7:1-4  
(NKJV - emphasis and clarity added)

- (1) Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), *that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives?*
- (2) For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband.
- (3) So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man.
- (4) Therefore, my brethren, *you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him (Jesus) who was raised from the dead,* that we should bear fruit to God.

Matthew 24:35 -- Heaven and earth will pass away, but *My words will by no means pass away.* (NKJV - emphasis added)

Galatians 2:20a -- *I have been crucified with Christ;* it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; (NKJV - emphasis added)

*TRUTHS ABOUT YOUR FIRST HUSBAND:*

**I. Law cannot justify.**

Romans 3:20 -- Therefore *by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight*, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. (NKJV - emphasis added)

Romans 3:28 -- Therefore we conclude that a *man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law*. (NKJV - emphasis added)

**Background:** The Judaizers were a Jewish sect that believed that you were saved by grace; but, to keep your salvation, you needed to keep the law. They caused Paul a great deal of trouble and grief. They would follow Paul as he preached salvation by grace through faith. In the book of Galatians, the Judaizers had followed Paul trying to convince the gentiles who had received Christ that to keep their salvation, they must be circumcised. They reasoned that such a grand gift as forgiveness from such a holy God *must* require some kind of payment from us. The Judaizers would try to convince converts to Christ that we certainly must thank God for His grace, but we must also understand that He expects us to somehow *earn* that grace—in other words, there must be *something* that we can do to pay off the debt that we owe to God.

Galatians 3:1-3  
(NKJV - clarity and emphasis added)

- (1) O foolish Galatians (*Idahoans*)! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified?
- (2) This only I want to learn from you: *Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?*
- (3) Are you so foolish? *Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect (complete) by the flesh?*

Galatians 3:1-3  
(MSG - clarity added)

- (1) You crazy Galatians! Did someone put a hex on you? Have you taken leave of your senses? Something crazy has happened, for it's obvious that you no longer have the crucified Jesus in clear focus in your lives. His sacrifice on the cross was certainly set before you clearly enough.
- (2) Let me put this question to you: How did your new life begin? Was it by working your heads off to please God? Or was it by responding to God's Message to you?
- (3) Are you going to continue this craziness? For only crazy people would think they could complete by their own efforts what was begun by God. If you weren't smart enough or strong enough to begin it, how do you suppose you could perfect (*or finish*) it?

**Wisdom Point:** When you require something in addition to God's grace for salvation, it's heresy. When you do that, you reduce Christianity to the same level of every other religion in the world. Remember, Christianity is not a religion -- it's a relationship!

## II. Law cannot empower.

**Wisdom Point:** The law cannot give you the ability (empower you) to do the right thing. It can only tell you what you do wrong.

Romans 7:4 -- Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him (*Jesus*) who was raised from the dead, *that we should bear fruit to God.* (NKJV - clarity and emphasis added)

**Wisdom Point:** Jesus is a husband that will give you fruit! The Law is an impotent husband and cannot help you bear fruit!

Galatians 2:21 -- "I do not set aside the grace of God; for *if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.*" (NKJV - emphasis added)

Romans 7:6 -- But now, by dying to what once bound us, *we have been released (discharged, freed) from the law* so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the code. (NIV - emphasis and clarity added)

**Word Study:** The word that is used for released in Romans 7:6 is the Greek word *katargeō*. It is a military word that literally means to be discharged; to be severed or separated from.

**Wisdom Point:** We need to remember that we don't serve a list (our old husband the law). Rather, we love a person (our new husband Jesus, our Savior)!

## III. Love can justify and empower.

1 John 4:16b -- *God is love*, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. (NKJV - emphasis added)

Matthew 22:37-39  
(NKJV - emphasis added)

(37) Jesus said to him, “*You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.*”

(38) This is the first and great commandment.

(39) And the second is like it: *‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’*

**Wisdom Point:** Love is the strongest governing force in the world. As believers we are governed by love. Preaching and ministering the law doesn't produce righteousness; preaching and ministering grace does. The strength of sin is the law!

1 Corinthians 15:56 -- The sting of death is sin, and *the strength of sin is the law.* (NKJV - emphasis added)

